

TSAI MING-LIANG AND A CINEMA OF SLOWNESS

19 June 2013, Wednesday, 7:00 - 8:30 pm

The Pod Level 16, National Library Building, 100 Victoria Street, Singapore 188064

SPEAKER

Dr Lim Song Hwee, University of Exeter, UK, and National University of Singapore

DISCUSSANT

Professor Pheng Cheah, National University of Singapore, and University of California-Berkeley, USA

CHAIRPERSON

Professor Chua Beng Huat, National University of Singapore

How can we qualify slowness in cinema, and what is the relationship between a cinema of slowness and a wider socio-cultural "slow movement"? With a body of films that share a propensity towards slowness emerging in many parts of the world over the past two decades, this lecture explores the concept of cinematic slowness and addresses this fascinating phenomenon through the films of the Malaysian-born, Taiwan-based director Tsai Ming-liang. Through detailed analysis of aspects of stillness and silence in cinema, the talk will delineate the strategies by which slowness in film can be constructed and make a passionate case for a slow cinema that calls for a renewed attention to the image and to the experience of time in film. In an age of unrelenting acceleration of pace both in film and in life, this talk invites us to pause and listen, to linger and look, to drift and meander, to contemplate and wander, and, above all, to take things slowly.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Lim Song Hwee is Senior Lecturer in Film Studies at the University of Exeter, UK. His research interests encompass transnational Chinese and East Asian cinemas, cinema and cultural identity, gender and sexuality studies, and postcolonial and diaspora studies. During his tenure as a Visiting Senior Research Fellow in the Cultural Studies in Asia research cluster at Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, he plans to develop a major new research project that will lead to his third monograph, tentatively titled "Chinese Cinemas in the 21st Century: Production, Consumption, Imagination". Dr Lim is the author of *Celluloid Comrades: Representations of Male Homosexuality in Contemporary Chinese Cinemas* (University of Hawaii Press, 2006), co-editor of *Remapping World Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics in Film* (Wallflower Press, 2006) and *The Chinese Cinema Book* (BFI/Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), and founding editor of the *Journal of Chinese Cinemas*. His second book, *Tsai Ming-liang and a Cinema of Slowness*, will appear with the University of Hawaii Press in early 2014.

Pheng Cheah is Professor of Rhetoric at the University of California, Berkeley. He has published extensively on the theory and practice of cosmopolitanism. He is the author of *Inhuman Conditions: On Cosmopolitanism and Human Rights* (Harvard UP, 2006) and *Spectral Nationality: Passages of Freedom from Kant to Postcolonial Literatures of Liberation* (Columbia UP, 2003) and co-editor of *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation* (University of Minnesota Press, 1998). He is also the co-editor of *Thinking through the Body of the Law* (Allen and Unwin, New York University Press, 1996); *Grounds of Comparison: Around the Work of Benedict Anderson* (Routledge, 2003); and *Derrida and the Time of the Political* (Duke University Press, 2009). He is completing a book on theories of the world and world literature from the postcolonial world in an age of financial globalization and a related book on globalization and the three Chinas as seen from the perspectives of the independent cinema of Jia Zhangke, Tsai Ming-Liang and Fruit Chan.